

REDDITCH URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT FOR THE YEAR 1945

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

- (a) A.B. Follows, M.D., Ch.B., D.P.H., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.
Medical Officer of Health (Part Time) & Assistant
County Medical Officer (January to September).
L.J. Bacon, M.A., M.D., B.Chir., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.
Medical Officer of Health (Part Time) & Assistant
County Medical Officer (October to December).

- (b) G.H. Champion, Cert. "S.I.B."
Senior Sanitary Inspector,
Meat and Food Inspector,
Inspector under the Shops Acts.

T. Hope, Cert. "S.I.B."
Additional Sanitary Inspector.

Miss A. Lilley - Senior Clerk (On active service).

Mrs. F.M. Ward - Senior Clerk (Temporary)

Miss S. Maries - Junior Clerk.

DISTRICT MEDICAL OFFICERS.

Dr. E. Protheroe Smith, L.R.C.P., M.R.C.S., Redditch. Part Time.

Dr. E.P. Dawes, L.R.C.P., L.R.C.S., (Edin.) Feckenham " "
L.R.S.P.S., (Glas.))

Dr. W.T. Mitchell, M.B., Ch.B., (Glas.1922))Beoley
Ipsley " "
Upper Ipsley

PUBLIC VACCINATORS.

Dr. E. Protheroe Smith, L.R.C.P., M.R.C.S., Redditch.

Dr. E.P. Dawes, L.R.C.P., L.R.C.S., (Edin) Feckenham.
L.R.S.P.S., (Glas.)

Dr. W.T. Mitchell, M.B., Ch.B. (Glas.1922)) Beoley
Ipsley
Upper Ipsley.

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE REDDITCH
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Mr. Chairman, Madam and Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in presenting to you my Annual Report on the health of the Redditch Urban District for the year 1945.

The greater part of the material presented relates to the period during which my predecessor, Dr. Follows, was Medical Officer of Health; but any expressions of opinion or interpretation are my own and for them I take responsibility.

The Minister of Health has intimated that the Report should again be produced in the restricted form of the war-time years. In the statistical section, I have followed the usual practice of giving comparable statistics for the past two years, so that the current trend may be followed: I have also included for comparison the figures for 1938, the last pre-war year.

The year 1945 saw the end of the war, and enabled the Department to turn again to the sanitary problems of peace-time and those of reconstruction. The outstanding problem is of course that of housing, to which reference is made later in the Report.

I should like to record my appreciation of the co-operation of the Committee and the Council's Officers during that part of the year during which I was in office.

SECTION A.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area - 12,359 acres.

Registrar General's Estimate of

resident population, mid 1945	-	25,470
" 1944	-	25,940
" 1943	-	26,390
" 1938	-	22,560

Number of inhabited houses - end of 1945	-	7,443
- end of 1944	-	7,437
- end of 1943	-	7,437
- end of 1938	-	7,116

Rateable Value, 1st October 1945 - £140,933

Sum represented by a Penny Rate - £560.

VITAL STATISTICS

BIRTH RATE (Births per 1,000 population):-

<u>1945</u>	<u>1944</u>	<u>1943</u>	<u>1938</u>	<u>1945 (England & Wales)</u>
18.9	24.0	18.38	14.54	16.1

Live Births			
	M	F	Total
Legitimate	233	221	454
Illegitimate	14	13	27
Total	247	234	481

ILLEGITIMACY RATE (Total live illegitimate births per 1,000 total live births):-

<u>1945</u>	<u>1944</u>	<u>1943</u>	<u>1938</u>
56.1	26.6	30.	38.1

STILL-BIRTH RATE (a) Still-Births per 1,000 total births:-

<u>1945</u>	<u>1944</u>	<u>1943</u>	<u>1938</u>
30.2	28.9	32.97	38.12

(b) Still-Births per 1,000 population:-

<u>1945</u>	<u>1945 (England & Wales)</u>
.59	0.46

Still-Births.			
	M	F	Total
Legitimate	5	8	13
Illegitimate	1	1	2
Total	6	9	15

DEATH RATE (Deaths per 1,000 population):-

<u>1945</u>	<u>1944</u>	<u>1943</u>	<u>1938</u>	<u>1945 (England & Wales)</u>
11.4	11.1	10.5	11.8	11.4

Deaths		
M	F	Total
139	152	291

MATERNAL MORTALITY. (Maternal deaths per 1,000 total births):-

<u>1945</u>	<u>1944</u>	<u>1943</u>	<u>1938</u>	<u>1945 (England & Wales)</u>
2.08	Nil	Nil	2.95	1.79

Maternal Deaths	
Puerperal Sepsis	1
Other maternal causes	0
Total	1

INFANTILE MORTALITY (Deaths of infants under 1 year of age per 1,000 related live births):-

	<u>1945</u>	<u>1944</u>	<u>1943</u>	<u>1938</u>	<u>1945 (England & Wales)</u>
Legitimate	48.5	30.4	37.5	41.4	-
Illegitimate	74.1	69.0	Nil	142.8	-
Total	47.8	32.1	55.7	45.7	46.0

Infant Deaths			
	M	F	Total
Legitimate	6	15	21
Illegitimate	1	1	2
Total	7	16	23

CAUSES OF DEATH IN THE REDDITCH URBAN DISTRICT, 1945.

CAUSE OF DEATH	M	F	TOTAL	MORTALITY RATE PER 1,000 POP:
1. Typhoid & paratyphoid fevers	0	1	1	0.04
2. Cerebro-spinal fever	0	0	0	0.00
3. Scarlet Fever	0	0	0	0.00
4. Whooping Cough	0	0	0	0.00
5. Diphtheria	1	0	1	0.04
6. Tuberculosis of Respiratory system.	10	6	16	0.63
7. Other forms of Tuberculosis	0	0	0	0.00
8. Syphilitic Diseases	0	0	0	0.00
9. Influenza	0	0	0	0.00
10. Measles	1	0	1	0.04
11. Acute polio-myelitis and polio-encephalitis	1	0	1	0.04
12. Acute infectious encephalitis	0	0	0	0.00
13. Cancer of buc.cav. & oesoph. and uterus	2	0	2	0.08
14. Cancer of stomach & duodenum	10	6	16	0.63
15. Cancer of breast	-	6	6	0.24
16. Cancer of all other sites	15	8	23	0.90
17. Diabetes	1	3	4	0.16
18. Intra-cranial vascular lesions	12	11	23	0.90
19. Heart disease	33	47	80	3.14
20. Other diseases of circulatory system	2	2	4	0.16
21. Bronchitis	5	6	11	0.43
22. Pneumonia	5	7	12	0.47
23. Other respiratory diseases	0	0	0	0.00
24. Ulcer of stomach or duodenum	5	0	5	0.19
25. Diarrhoea (under 2 years)	1	0	1	0.04x
26. Appendicitis	1	2	3	0.12
27. Other digestive diseases	2	4	6	0.24
28. Nephritis	4	6	10	0.39
29. Puerperal & post-abortion sepsis.	-	1	1	0.04
30. Other maternal causes	-	0	0	0.00
31. Premature birth, con.mal.)	4	9	13	0.51
& 32. birth inj., infant dis.)	0	0	0	0.00
33. Suicide	0	0	0	0.00
34. Violence	3	1	4	0.16
35. Road traffic accidents	3	1	4	0.16
36. All other causes	18	25	43	1.69
Total	139	152	291	11.44
(x Rate per 1,000 live births = 2.08)				

The Vital Statistics for the area show no major departure from those of previous years or from those of the country as a whole.

The Birth Rate (18.9) is well below last year's exceptionally high figure, though it is still greater than that for England and Wales. It is common knowledge that the falling Birth Rate of the pre-war years was causing great concern, and has given rise to grave prognostications as to a diminished and aging population in the coming decades.

During the war-years a sharp rise was noted, which has not been fully explained: thus it is somewhat disappointing to find the Rate falling in this district in 1945.

The Illegitimacy Rate is lamentably high at 56.1. It is more than double last year's figure. While this adverse feature cannot be said to result from, or to indicate, any deficiency in the health of the district, it is nevertheless of considerable importance as tending to lead indirectly to "ill-health" (using that term in a wide sense): illegitimate children suffer more from neglect than their more fortunate fellows born in wedlock, and make a disproportionately high contribution to (a) the infantile mortality (see below), (b) the children requiring to be cared for at the public expense, and probably (c) the children and adults whose health is impaired by neglect and subnutrition. High Illegitimacy Rates are of course a feature of war-time, and tend to be localised according to the disposition of military camps: the high rate in Redditch last year is not readily explicable on these lines.

The Death Rate (11.4) is a little higher than in 1944, and is the same as that for England & Wales. The table of causes of death shows no exceptional features. The major causes were:-

1. Diseases of the Heart & Circulatory System (including apoplexy).	36.8% of all deaths
2. Cancer (all forms)	16.2% of all deaths
3. Respiratory Diseases (excluding T.B.)	9.3% of all deaths
4. Tuberculosis	5.5% of all deaths
5. Nephritis	3.4% of all deaths

The first of these categories includes the majority of "natural" death in old age, and, on present knowledge, cannot be regarded as in any way preventable. The same cannot be said of the second cause of death - cancer. This is on the increase as a certified cause of death, though whether the increase is real or only apparent (due to more efficient diagnosis) is a moot point. Most cancer is curable, if detected in an early stage, and so this very important group of deaths must be regarded as preventable.

The respiratory deaths are a somewhat miscellaneous group, but the majority represent a terminal bronchitis in old age, and may thus be regarded as "natural" deaths. The deaths from tuberculosis must be considered preventable; and increasing knowledge of nephritis may lead to a similar conclusion in respect of this cause of death.

Of the other vital statistics, the Infantile Mortality is usually regarded as the most sensitive indicator of the health of a community; but it is necessary to add that in a district such as Redditch it is based upon a relatively small number of deaths, and is therefore subject to considerable chance variation. At 47.8 it is a little above that for the country as a whole, and very much above last year's exceptionally low figure. The Still-Birth Rate (30.2) is substantially higher than that for England & Wales. These two groups of deaths (still-births and infant deaths) amount to a loss, before the end of their first year, of 38 infants out of 496 born, and this represents a great deal of human suffering, some of which must be regarded as preventable.

It will be noted that the Infantile Mortality figure for illegitimate infants is very much higher than for legitimate infants. The figure has little mathematical significance, because it is based upon only 5 illegitimate deaths: nevertheless it is in accord with general experience, and serves to call attention to the adverse start in life which such children tend to have, and to the special care and supervision which they accordingly need.

As regards Maternal Mortality, the fact that a single maternal death can result in a mortality rate (2.08) which is 16% above the figure for England and Wales is a sobering reflection upon the significance of Vital Statistics!

SECTION B.

General Provision of Health Services.

Services provided by the County Council.

The County Council, as Welfare and Education Authority, provides a majority of the personal health services for the District. These services include:-

1) Clinics and Treatment Centres.

Clinic	Situation	Time of Holding
Redditch Infant Welfare Centre	Old Vicarage, Bromsgrove Road.	Monday and Tuesday 2 p.m.
Astwood Bank Infant Welfare Centre	Church Hall, Astwood Bank.	2nd and 4th Mondays, 2 p.m.
Woolwich Infant Welfare Centre	Village Hall, Woolwich.	1st Wednesdays, 2 p.m.
General Clinic	Old Vicarage.	Tuesdays, 10 a.m.
Eye Clinic	Old Vicarage.	Thursdays, 11.50 a.m.
Ear, Nose and Throat Clinic	Old Vicarage.	Wednesdays and Fridays 10 a.m.
Orthopaedic Clinic	Old Vicarage.	Mondays, 10 a.m.
Tuberculosis Centre	The Dispensary, Elm Road.	Fridays, 2 p.m.

A great deal of valuable work, directed towards the preservation of health and the prevention of disease, is carried out in these centres by the Medical and Nursing staff. In the Welfare Centres there is additional assistance, which is greatly appreciated, from voluntary workers.

2) Midwifery Services (domiciliary).

Midwives in private practice and employed by the District Nursing Associations are supervised for this purpose by the County Council.

3) Laboratory Facilities. The County Analyst undertakes the examination of clinical material (throat-swabs, sputum, blood, etc.), food, milk and foodstuffs.

4) Hospitals. The following Hospital facilities are available, most of which are provided, directly or by arrangement, by the County Council:-

Infectious Disease (including Tuberculosis)	Bromsgrove, Droitwich and Redditch Joint Hospital (Bromsgrove)
Tuberculosis	Knightwick Sanatorium and Hayley Green Sanatorium.
Smallpox	W.C.C. Smallpox Hospital, Worcester.
Maternity	Mary Stephens Maternity Hospital, Stourbridge; and Lucy Baldwin Maternity Hospital, Stourport.
Children's diseases	The Children's Hospital, Birmingham.

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|--------------------------------------|---|
| 6. Tonsil and adenoid cases | Smallwood Hospital, Redditch. |
| 7. Puerperal Fever & Pyrexia cases | The General Hospital, Birmingham.
The Royal Infirmary, Worcester. |
| 8. Venereal Disease | The General Hospital, Birmingham.
The Royal Infirmary, Worcester. |
| 9. Public Assistance Cases (General) | The Bromsgrove Public Assistance Institution. |
| 10. Public Assistance Cases (Mental) | Barnsley Hall Mental Hospital, Bromsgrove; and Powick Mental Hospital, Malvern. |

In addition to the foregoing hospital-facilities provided by or through the County Council, Redditch residents have access to the Smallwood Hospital for general illness. Also there were, in 1945, four privately provided Nursing Homes (supervised by the County Council), which took chiefly maternity cases.

The Diphtheria Immunisation Service (see Section F) was provided primarily by the Urban District Council, with substantial assistance from the County Council in respect of staff, materials, and premises. In November, 1945, however, the responsibility for immunisation of children under 5 years of age was placed upon the County Council as Welfare Authority: this did not in practice call for any material change in the system of mutual collaboration already in existence.

The Ambulance Service. An ambulance is provided by the Joint Hospital Board for the conveyance of infectious cases. For other cases, an ambulance is provided by the Urban District Council. Thanks are due to the St. John's Ambulance Brigade, whose members have given valuable assistance in staffing the Ambulance.

Home Nursing. There is a need in the District for improved provision for the care, in their own homes, of the acute and chronic sick and the aged. The District Nursing Associations provide for the strictly nursing requirements of their contributors; but there is beyond this a crying need for nursing and domestic assistance in selected cases. The needs of the acutely sick can in most instances be met by hospitalisation or by assistance from relatives or neighbours, at ordinary times. In the event, however, of an epidemic of disease which would incapacitate a large number of people at one time, without warranting admission to hospital, such arrangements would break down. There was a fear that in the winter of 1944-5, and again in 1945-6, there might be an epidemic of influenza which would produce these conditions. In anticipation of this a scheme of assistance was prepared, by which a number of voluntary organisations undertook to provide, by rota, domestic and nursing help if required. Fortunately no major influenza epidemic developed (though in the winter of 1945-6 there was a prevalence of mild influenza which certainly taxed medical and nursing personnel to the full), and the scheme was not put into operation.

The needs of the chronic sick and the aged are yet more difficult to meet. In general the assistance required is of a domestic rather than a nursing nature, and it is required over a long period of time. In addition a small proportion of the aged become, as a feature of their senility, very difficult to assist. For various reasons it is frequently impossible for such people to obtain assistance from relatives or neighbours. During the war powers were given to Local Authorities to provide domestic help in such cases (on a basis comparable with the system of Home Helps for Maternity cases): an attempt to implement the proposal in Worcestershire failed owing to the negligible response to advertisement for persons willing to work in the service.

It is likely that this need will increase.

SECTION C.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

WATER SUPPLY

The excellent quality of the water in the district is being maintained. Samples are frequently submitted by the Water Company to the County Analyst for chemical and bacteriological examination and below is given the result of a typical analysis:-

Sample taken in September, 1945.

<u>Physical Characters.</u>	Clear, odourless.
Deposit	None.
	pH 6.8

Chemical Examination. (Results expressed in parts per 100,000)

Solids in Suspension	(Dried at 100°C)	...	...	None
Solids in solution	(Dried at 100°C)	...	...	18
" " "	After ignition	...	...	15
Chlorides calculated as Common Salt		...	...	3.2
Hardness	Permanent	...	...	10
"	Temporary	...	...	2
"	Total	...	...	12
Free and Saline Ammonia		...	...	0.0006
Free Ammonia		...	...	0.0008
Nitric Nitrogen (Nitrates)		...	...	Trace
Nitrous Nitrogen (Nitrites)		...	...	None
Oxygen absorbed in 4 hours at 27°C		...	...	0.013
Toxic Metals	...	...	...	None detected

Note: To convert the above parts per 100,000 to grains per gallon multiply by 0.7.

Bacteriological Examination.

Number of Colonies developing upon Agar.

(a) In two days at 37°C	...	...	1 per one ml.
(b) In Three days at 22°C	...	...	Nil per one ml.
Coli-Aerogenes (Presumptive Coli) Count	...	"	per 100 ml.
Streptococci	...	...	Absent.

Opinion:- The sample is fit for drinking."

Schemes for extension of water-supplies to rural parts of the District, are under consideration. It is known that there are still a number of dwelling-houses dependent upon well-waters which have been found to be polluted; these are mainly in the Berrow Hill and Bradley Green areas. In addition many houses have access to a communal stand-pipe but lack internal water-supplies - an arrangement which, while it ensures that the water supplied is of good quality, is nevertheless unsatisfactory because the additional trouble involved in obtaining water discourages the maintenance of a high standard of domestic and personal hygiene. Despite these conditions it is in general true to say that the District, including the rural parts, is well served with pure water.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

There are still many houses in the District which are dependant upon conservancy methods for the disposal of their sewage. Pail-closets are used in 479 dwellings (6.4% of all occupied houses); and in addition approximately 250 houses are provided with cess-pools, which are emptied on request by the Surveyor's Department. The pail-closets are essentially an unhygienic appliance, and the cess-pools have given rise to nuisance in a number of instances; thus it is apparent that there is a need for further extension of sewers. The chief sources of trouble are at Bordesley, Astwood Bank and Dagtail.

RODENT CONTROL.

Close liaison has been maintained with the Divisional Rodent Officer of the Ministry of Food, and a constant and successful campaign against rats was in progress throughout the year. All major infestations have been brought under control, and in the town area it is believed that very few premises remain infested. A systematic treatment of sewers, carried out under direction from the Ministry of Food, revealed only slight localised infestation.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

This has been constantly maintained and the details of inspections made are contained in the figures supplied by the Sanitary Inspector in the report attached.

PUBLIC CLEANSING.

Refuse collection and disposal is supervised by the Surveyor. Disposal is by tipping, and the tips are subject to periodic inspection by the Sanitary staff.

CAMPING SITES.

19 licences were issued during the year under Section 269 of the Public Health Act, 1936. These were in respect of established sites, satisfactory in respect of water-supply, sewage and refuse-disposal, spacing, etc., and the licences were for a limited period (1 year).

SMOKE ABATEMENT.

Redditch is fortunate in not being troubled to any extent by smoke from factory chimneys. The domestic hearth is, however, responsible for much pollution of the atmosphere and I look forward to the time when scientific achievement can produce a smokeless fuel at a price within reach of all consumers. It is also to be hoped that with the development of post-war housing attention will be paid to the installation of heating-appliances which do not produce smoke, including grates capable of burning smokeless fuels.

SECTION D.

HOUSING.

One Demolition Order was made during the year in respect of an irretrievably insanitary hutment, and the family was re-housed. The fact that no other Demolition Orders were made does not mean that none were needed. A large number of premises are in occupation which by ordinary standards are unfit for habitation; owing however to the lack of alternative accommodation these must be allowed to remain in use.

The occupation of unfit premises is only one aspect of the extremely unsatisfactory state of housing in the District. Over-crowding is widely prevalent, and a large number of houses are in need of extensive repair.

It is known that 221 houses are totally unfit, but this figure is likely to increase when a complete survey becomes possible, and also a

very much larger number of houses are now unsatisfactory in varying degrees. A new survey is urgently needed: it will not remedy the housing position, but it will provide guidance as to the needs and priorities of re-housing.

SECTION E.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION
OF FOOD.

(a) MILK SUPPLY.

No. of Dairy farms in district	-	79
" " Dairymen registered	-	95
" " T.T. Producers	-	5
" " Accredited Producers	-	6

The supply of milk in the District cannot be regarded as altogether satisfactory, in that a great deal of non-designated milk is produced, of which some is sold raw. The conditions at the farms are not in all cases satisfactory, and some of the milk supplied must be regarded as potentially productive of disease. It would seem that the difficulties of clean milk-production are such that the objective of a safe milk supply in the district can only be met by pasteurisation of all non-designated milk.

The Food and Drugs (Milk and Dairies) Act, 1944, proposes the transfer of control of cowsheds and milk-production (but not distribution) from Local Authorities to the Ministry of Agriculture. The date for implementation of this proposal is not yet fixed. The reasons given for the proposed change are the need for more uniform control (which implies that some Authorities are held to be backward in this respect) and the allegedly greater suitability of veterinary officers for the work. The validity of these arguments is open to question, and the separation of the control of production from that of distribution seems somewhat unfortunate. The responsibility to see that milk sold in Redditch does not act as a vehicle of disease will remain with the Urban District Council, but the power to see that it does not will largely pass out of their hands.

(b) MEAT AND OTHER FOODS.

Centralised slaughtering has continued under the Ministry of Food Scheme and consequently the private slaughter houses in the district are not in use. The cottager's pig is usually slaughtered under very unsatisfactory conditions, and adequate inspection is extremely difficult. Nevertheless a system of informal notification of intention to slaughter permitted the inspection of carcasses in a large number of instances.

Inspection of food-preparing premises, shops and markets has continued, 166 inspections having been made. This work - the implementation of Section 13 of the Food and Drugs Act 1938 - ranks second only to housing in its urgency and importance, and calls for great expansion.

SECTION F.

PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES (OTHER THAN TUBERCULOSIS) DURING 1945.

Disease	Total Cases Notified.	Cases admitted to Hospital.	Total Deaths.
Scarlet Fever	32	27	0
Whooping Cough	26	0	0
Diphtheria (confirmed cases)	4	4	1
Measles	376	0	1
Pneumonia	3	0	12
Cerebro-Spinal Meningitis	3	3	0
Puerperal Pyrexia	2	2	1
Sonne Dysentery	1	0	0

The figure for pneumonia deaths is not relatable to the figure for notifications: pneumonia is not infrequently entered as the cause of death in cases in which there has been no notification.

Measles was epidemic in the district during the winter of 1944-5: the total number of cases was 376, of which the majority occurred after the new year: the peak incidence was in March (128 cases). Thus the outbreak was exceptionally protracted: some adults were affected, and in them the disease took a severer form. Convalescent measles serum was administered to contacts in selected cases. Leaflets on measles (and also on whooping-cough) were distributed to the public. That measles should have appeared in epidemic form is not surprising, since the last previous epidemic was in 1941, and the majority of the child population under 5 must have been lacking immunity. There was no epidemic recurrence in the winter of 1945-6.

No other notifiable disease was prevalent in the District during 1945, and, apart from the measles, it may be said that this year was yet another added to a sequence of war-years outstandingly free from epidemic disease.

Medical practitioners have been most helpful in fulfilling their obligations in respect of the early notification of disease.

Diphtheria Immunisation.

The numbers of children who completed a course of immunisation during the years 1938 to 1945 are as follows:-

	1938	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1938 - 1939 & 1941 - 1945
Under 5	57	113	No figures available	136	338	604	349	499	2096
Over 5	118	185		1024	514	345	100	64	2350
Total	175	298		1160	852	949	449	563	4446

It will be seen that the rate of immunisation has been well-maintained, but I believe that it is also true that a great many children under 15 remain to be immunised. The most important thing is to concentrate on achieving the immunisation of children before their first birthday (and preferably during their ninth month): this was recognised by the Ministry of Health in a Circular issued in November, 1945, which placed the responsibility for the immunisation of children under 5 upon Welfare Authorities. At the same time a modified form of annual return was requested, which would show the position, as regards total children known to be immunised, in each district at the end of the year, and the state of immunisation of children (if any) dying of diphtheria during the year. The return for 1945 was as follows:-

Children known to have completed a course of immunisation against diphtheria at any time up to December 31st, 1945:-

Age	0-1	1	2	3	4	5	10 - 15	Total
Number immunised	4	311	354	379	529	1,498	1,125	3,980
Population (approx.)	2,655					3,300		5,955
% immunised	51.1%					79.5%		66.8%

These figures are not directly comparable with those presented in previous years. They relate only to individual children known to have been immunised either through the Clinics or privately. Previous figures have included an estimate of the numbers treated privately: such an estimate is necessarily quite unreliable, and it will in future be preferable to give the official figures which, although less flattering to the success of the Immunisation Scheme, are fully trustworthy and will henceforth be comparable as between successive years. It is to be added that the position in Redditch compares favourably with that in the country as a whole, and while the foregoing figures imply that there remains a good deal to be done in securing an immune child-population, it must not be supposed that past achievements are without result. There has been a steady fall in the incidence of diphtheria during the past eight years, as is shown in the following table:-

Diphtheria 1938 - 45.

	1938	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945
Cases (notified and confirmed)	29	46	10	12	6	6	5	4
Deaths	5	2	0	2	1	0	0	1
Immunised cases	2	0	2	0	0	0	2	1

The fatal case in 1945 was an unimmunised child of 4 years.

It is of interest that of the 4 cases occurring in 1945, 3 were over the age of 15. Diphtheria used to be mainly a children's disease. It has been suggested that immunisation has the effect of putting off the disease until a later age: this, if it were true, would be a desirable effect, since the severity and mortality of the disease decrease with increasing age of the patient. But in fact the number of cases in older subjects has not increased: it is only the proportion of older patients that has increased owing to the diminished incidence in younger subjects.

SCABIES.

This condition was on the wane in 1945: Redditch shared in the war-time epidemic which was observed throughout the whole country, but here as elsewhere the disease was less apparent in 1945 than in previous years. Nevertheless it was still frequently met with in the Clinics and schools, and during the last three months of the year an intensified attack was initiated with a view to giving the epidemic a "knock-out blow".

Scabies is a strictly contagious disease due to an animal parasite; and it is readily cured in the individual. Unfortunately, once the disease occurs in a household it nearly always spreads to all the members of that household, and lasting cure can only be achieved by treating the whole family at the same time. To achieve this, the establishment of a special Treatment Centre (which would also be used for the treatment of head lice) was agreed upon; and as an interim measure a scheme of domiciliary treatment was introduced.

A member of the County Council's Welfare staff visited all cases, giving detailed instructions (verbal and typed) for treatment, and supplying the necessary quantity of benzyl benzoate for the entire household to be treated. Treatment was by two applications (on a single occasion) of benzyl benzoate, with bathing as a desirable but non-essential preliminary. No disinfection of bedding or clothing was undertaken, but advice was given as to dealing with these articles at home. The Visitor called a day or two later to satisfy herself that treatment had been carried out; and the patients were seen by a medical officer after one week (for readmission of school-children) and after five weeks.

The General Practitioners in the district have proved very co-operative - an important factor in relation to the ascertainment of this non-notifiable disease. Cases were treated under the scheme (during the last 2 months of 1945) as follows:-

Households	8
Known cases	22
Contacts	28
Total persons treated	50

No case showed evidence of "relapse" (i.e. failure of treatment, or re-infestation) on re-examination after 5 weeks, and no case has been reported as re-infested subsequently. Patients and their contacts have proved consistently co-operative. A very great reduction in time lost from school on account of scabies has been effected. At the time of writing (a much larger number of families having been treated) it seems likely that the provision of a Treatment Centre will prove redundant, so far as scabies is concerned.

Other Vermineous Conditions.

Head-lice are widely prevalent among the school-children, and their repeated re-infestation after thorough treatment with Lethane oil at the School Clinic must be taken as evidence that the older (and younger) members of the family are also infested. While a high proportion of children show occasional light infestation, the essence of the problem is a few families who are "chronic offenders". This condition requires treatment on a household basis, like scabies; and steps have since (in 1946) been taken to achieve this.

Body-lice. No instances of this type of infestation reached the notice of the Health Department during 1945.

Crab-lice. An interesting and unusual problem was presented by a mother and two children who were infested with crab-lice. The mother was affected in the usual sites; but the two children (one of Junior School age and the other a baby attending the Day Nursery) had crab-lice on the scalp and also on the eye-lashes. The heads were treated with Lethane Oil; the lashes in the case of the older boy by removal with forceps (some 50 lice being removed) and in the baby with mercury ointment; and the mother (and also the bedding) by dusting with D.D.T. powder. The infestation was successfully eliminated.

Fleas are a problem in some households, as evidenced by the tired, scratched, badly bitten state of the children in school. Advice as to cleaning the home, and assistance by spraying and dusting with D.D.T., has been given by the Sanitary staff in these cases. Similar assistance has also been given in a few cases of infestation by bed-bugs.

TUBERCULOSIS

NEW CASES AND MORTALITY DURING 1945.

Age Periods.	<u>New Cases</u>				<u>Deaths</u>			
	Respiratory.		Non-Resp.		Respiratory.		Non-Resp.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0 -	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1 -	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5 -	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
15 -	6	3	0	0	0	4	0	0
25 -	2	3	0	0	0	1	0	0
35 -	4	1	0	0	3	0	0	0
45 -	1	0	0	0	4	0	0	0
55 -	2	0	0	0	2	1	0	0
65 and upwards	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTALS:-	15	8	0	0	9	6	0	0

The number of cases on the Register at December 31st, 1945 was:-

	M.	F.	Total
Pulmonary	53	42	95
Non-pulmonary	8	8	16
Total -	61	50	111

Your obedient servant,

L.J. BACON, M.A., M.D., D.P.H.,
Medical Officer of Health.

REPORT OF THE SANITARY INSPECTOR
FOR THE YEAR 1945.

To the Chairman and Members of the Redditch
Urban District Council.

Mrs. Houfton and Gentlemen,

I beg to present my seventh annual report for the year 1945. The restrictions imposed on materials and labour and the difficulties of replacing staff make it difficult to keep pace with housing repairs, even the most essential work of roofs and drainage. The result will be a large number of houses in a state of disrepair. At present we can only maintain a weatherproof condition. A survey has been made of pail closets and a detailed report was submitted to you, but again it is a question of knowing what is required to raise the standard of sanitation in the area but unable to carry it out.

I was pleased to welcome Mr. T. Hope, Additional Sanitary Inspector on his return from the Forces, and his help will be appreciated in the work that remains to be done. A summary of the work of the department is as follows:-

Inspections.

Animals Kept	-	Piggeries	...	...	314
		Stables	...	...	5
		Fowls, pigeons, etc.	...	...	56
Complaints	-	Total No. investigated	...	...	272
Dairies	-	Cowsheds	...	...	87
		Dairies	...	...	46
Disinfection	-	No. of houses disinfected			51
		No. of other buildings disinfected			2
Disinfestation	-	No. of houses infested with			
		fleas and bugs	...	...	8
Drainage	-	No. of drains found choked			28
		No. of drains found defective			6
		No. of drains tested			14
		Visits to works in progress			43
Dwelling houses	-	No. inspected re repairs			67
		Re-inspections	...	...	119
		Inspections re overcrowding			15
		No. found dirty			11
		No. found verminous			8
Infectious Diseases		Visits re scarlet fever	...	...	31
		" " diphtheria	...	...	4
		" " other diseases			24
Factories	-	With mechanised power	...	...	25
		Without mechanised power	...	...	6
		Bakehouses	...	...	18
Food Premises	-	Butchers' shops	...	...	94
		Preparation of potted meat etc.			8
		Manufacture and sale of ice cream			36
		Fruiterers	...	...	14
		Fishmongers and fried fish shops			9
		Restaurants and cafe kitchens			5
		Samples of milk taken for bacteriological examination			36

Miscellaneous Visits	-	No. of visits not otherwise classified	...	93
Shops Acts	...	...	...	24
Tents, vans, sheds, etc.	...	...	...	46
Water supplies		Visits to premises re wells		47
		No. of samples taken	...	12

Total No. of inspections 1684

IMPROVEMENTS.

Houses generally repaired	...	...	...	43
Wash-houses repaired	...	...	...	7
Water closets repaired or renewed	...	...	...	22
Additional water closets provided	...	...	...	2
Houses cleansed	...	...	...	11
Verminous premises disinfested	...	...	...	8
Drains reconstructed	...	...	...	6
Choked drains cleared	...	...	...	28
Dustbins provided	...	...	...	11
Accumulations removed	...	...	...	5
Cesspools emptied	...	...	...	9
Cesspools abolished	...	...	...	1
Wells abolished and mains supplies laid on				1

ERADICATION OF BED BUGS AND LICE.

Seven houses were found to be infested with bed bugs. Liquid insecticide is used for disinfestation and "Zaldecide" is found to be most effective. The premises are examined 10 - 14 days after treatment. In one case only was it necessary to carry out further treatment.

MILK SUPPLY.

The Register contains 95 Retail Purveyors and 79 Wholesale Traders and Producers. During the year 133 inspections were made.

Improvements have been carried out at Callow Hill Farm, where the cowshed was enlarged and a new dairy provided, Brook Farm where the buildings were improved to T.T. standard, and Norgrove Court Farm, where a new cowshed for 40 cows was built.

At the January Committee, a report was submitted dealing with contraventions by The Redditch Pure Milk Company. As a result of an inspection at their dairy in Albert Street on the 9th January, I found that undesignated milk was being bottled and capped "Tuberculin Tested Milk Certified" produced at Weights Farm, whereas the churn from which the milk was being used was labelled "Houfton" Tack Farm.

Legal proceedings were successfully instituted against The Redditch Pure Milk Company for this offence and their licence to retail T.T. milk was not renewed. They appealed to the Ministry of Health in accordance with the provisions of the Milk Special Designations Order. This appeal had not been disposed of by the end of the year.

A number of complaints are received regularly of the poor keeping quality of milk supplied by some retailers in the town. Invariably the complaints refer to milk produced outside the area and each time the local authority concerned is notified of these complaints.

Licences granted during the year under the Milk (Special Designations) Order are as follows:-

Pasteurised (to bottle and sell)	1
Tuberculin Tested (Dealers)	1
Pasteurised (Dealers)	6

36 samples of milk, 13 pasteurised, 21 tuberculin tested and 2 undesignated, were taken for bacteriological examination. All of them were satisfactory.

WATER SUPPLIES.

Samples of water were taken from wells at all houses in Wadbury Hill and Tippings Hill. The analyst reported that the supplies in each case were unfit for drinking. A report was submitted to the January meeting of the Health Committee and it was referred to a sub-committee of the Public Works Committee to consider mains extensions.

One cottage in Pumphouse Lane, occupied by Mrs. Newman, was provided with a mains supply. The water from the well was found to be unfit for drinking.

Mr. F.H. Bullock, Water Engineer to the East Worcestershire Waterworks Co. informs me that during the year 423 yards of 3" C.I. main were laid in Kingsley Avenue.

MEAT AND OTHER FOODS.

Meat supplied in the town is received from the Government controlled slaughterhouse at Alcester at which all food animals have been slaughtered for retail for this area since 1940. During the year only 12 lbs. of beef was surrendered as unfit for human consumption. Notification was received of the slaughter of 451 cottagers' pigs of which 315 were inspected.

The following is a list of foodstuffs condemned as unfit for human consumption during 1945:-

Tinned foods, various	183 tins
Jam	85 lbs.
Mincemeat	7 lbs.
Bacon	128 lbs.
Sausage	151 lbs.
Tinned milk	25 tins
Pork Pies	18
Steak Pies	24
Grosvenor Pie	6 $\frac{1}{4}$ lbs.
Fish	20 stone
Beef Luncheon	5 lbs. 2 ozs.
Pudding Mixture	21 pkts.
Semolina Pudding	288 pkts.
Apples	144 lbs.
Pigs' Heads	2
Butter	119 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs.
Meat Pies	123
Dates	240 lbs.
Cheese	21 lbs. 6 ozs.
Bread	120 lbs.
Ham	15 $\frac{1}{4}$ lbs.
Prunes	21 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.
Sultanas	60 lbs.
Margarine	12 lbs.

RATS AND MICE DESTRUCTION.

In January 1945 the preliminary work of loosening sewer manholes and fixing trays, where necessary, for baiting was completed.

The whole area was then divided into 8 sections, comprising 4 sections in the old area, and Webheath, Crabbs Cross and Hunt End, Astwood Bank and Feckenham. The campaign for rat destruction consisted of (first treatment) baiting the manholes each day, Monday to Thursday, with sausage rusk and adding 5% of Zinc Phosphide on Fridays, and the results were noted on Saturday. In the first treatment, 471 manholes were baited out of a total of 516.

The second treatment followed, and 196 manholes were treated, comprising all manholes where bait had been taken and two manholes either side. The bait was changed to bread mash and barium carbonate.

The campaign disclosed that sewers are not badly infested as a whole, but only in isolated sections. Astwood Bank was badly infested, and also in the town, Marsden Road and Orchard Street area.

It was found necessary to bait the manholes later in the year in Marsden Road, Mount Street, Orchard Street, and Oswald Street.

When the sewer treatment had been completed, Mr. Dyde commenced a systematic inspection of factories in the area, and attended to any infestations that were found. 40 premises were dealt with during the year.

CLOSET ACCOMMODATION.

Number of pail closets converted into water closets		Nil
Number of trough closets converted into water closets		Nil
Analysis of sanitary accommodation at the end of 1945.	Water closets	5316
	Automatically flushed W.Cs.	357
	Waste water closets	16
	Slop closets	97
	Pail closets	479
	Earth closets	17

PAIL CLOSETS.

A survey was carried out at all premises where the Council empty pail closets, and it was found that 330 are regularly emptied from 351 premises. The majority of these houses have separate accommodation, and 45 premises have common accommodation (24 pails).

Of the 351 premises, 210 can be connected to the sewer, and of the 141 premises where the sewer is not available 56 can be connected to the sewers where reasonable extensions are carried out.

Information has been collated and recorded including a plan of each block of buildings, and the suggested drainage arrangements for the conversions.

AMBULANCE.

Report on cases dealt with for the year 1945.

13,080 Miles were covered by the Ambulance car.

96	Accident cases were attended to.
235	Medical " " " "
318	Surgical " " " "
124	Maternity " " " "
3	Mental " " " "

Making a TOTAL of 753 cases attended and conveyed to various Hospitals, conveying 783 patients.

69 cases conveyed for Worcs. County Council, P.A.D.
 1 " " " " Wars. County Council, P.A.C.
 81 Night service cases attended.

Amount due:- £711. 12. 2d.

Remarks - District Nurse on 43 Maternity Cases.

The award of the Joint Industrial Council concerning the working conditions of the Ambulance drivers was received in June, 1945, and was put into operation. The shift arrangements were altered to conform with the 48 hour week, and the St. John's Ambulance Brigade volunteered to work an 8 hour shift on Saturday and Sunday to make this possible. They also give additional assistance during holidays and have rendered valuable service to the Council.

Housing

INSPECTION OF DWELLING HOUSES DURING THE YEAR.

(1)	(a)	Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	381
	(b)	Number of inspections made for the purpose	381
(2)	(a)	Number of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 and 1932	Nil
	(b)	Number of inspections made for the purpose	Nil
(3)		Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation ...	221
(4)		Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation ...	67

REMEDY OF DEFECTS WITHOUT SERVICE OF FORMAL NOTICES.

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers	35
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ACTION UNDER STATUTORY POWERS DURING THE YEAR.

(a) PROCEEDINGS UNDER SECTIONS 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936.	
(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Notices were served requiring repairs ...	Nil
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal Notices:-	
(a) By Owners ...	Nil
(b) By local authority in default of Owners	Nil
(b) PROCEEDINGS UNDER PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS.	
(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Notices were served requiring defects to be remedied ...	8
(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal Notices:-	
(a) By Owners ...	8
(b) By local authority in default of owners	Nil
(c) PROCEEDINGS UNDER SECTIONS 11 and 13 OF THE HOUSING ACT, 1936.	
(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made ...	1
(2) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders ...	Nil
(d) PROCEEDINGS UNDER SECTION 12 OF THE HOUSING ACT, 1936.	
(1) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made ...	Nil
(2) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit ...	Nil

HOUSING ACT, 1936. PART IV. OVERCROWDING.

(a)	(i) Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year ...	78
	(ii) Number of families dwelling therein ...	82
	(iii) Number of persons dwelling therein ...	581
(b)	Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year ...	22
(c)	(i) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year ...	7
	(ii) Number of persons concerned in such cases	32
(d)	Particulars of any cases in which dwelling-houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding ...	Nil

This does not indicate the true position of overcrowding in the district, and there are a large number of cases of which full details are not known. Owing to shortage of staff it is impossible to keep an up-to-date record of the overcrowding position where so many families are changing houses, removing from or to the town every week.

FACTORIES.

1. INSPECTIONS FOR PURPOSES OF PROVISIONS AS TO HEALTH.

Premises (1)	Number of		
	Inspections (2)	Written Notices (3)	Occupiers Prosecuted (4)
FACTORIES, with mechanical power.	25	Nil	Nil
FACTORIES, without mechanical power.	6	Nil	Nil
xOTHER PREMISES, under the Act (including works of building and engineering construction, but not including outworkers' premises.	4	Nil	Nil
x Electrical Stations should be reckoned as factories.			
TOTAL:	35	Nil	Nil

2. DEFECTS FOUND.

Particulars (1)	Number of Defects.			Number of offences in respect of which Prosecutions were instituted. (5)
	Found. (2)	Remedied. (3)	Referred to H.M. Inspector (4)	
Want of cleanliness (S.1)	12	12	Nil	Nil
Overcrowding (S.2)	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Unreasonable temperature (S.3) ...	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Inadequate ventilation (S.4) ...	1	1	Nil	Nil
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6) ...	-	-	Nil	Nil
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7) insufficient	2	2	-	Nil
unsuitable or defective	6	6	-	Nil
not separate for sexes	Nil	Nil	-	Nil
Other offences	-	-	-	Nil
TOTAL -	21	21	Nil	Nil

BATHING STATION.

Since the cessation of hostilities the cleansing station, Evesham Street, has been opened on Wednesday evenings and used as a bathing station for males from 7 - 9 p.m. It has been manned by personnel from the first party which carried out civil defence duties at the South Street first aid post. The station was also used occasionally by troops in the neighbourhood and arrangements were made to open the station for them when they required it. During the year there were 349 attendances.

SWIMMING BATHS.

A sample of water was taken from the baths for chemical and bacteriological examination and the County Analyst reported as follows:-

Free chlorine tends to disappear from the sample; when received the content was 0.04 parts per million. The Ministry of Health Report recommends the maintenance in the pool of 0.2 to 0.5 parts per million free chlorine. This will result in a nearly sterile water and the bacteriological results are further evidence that the chlorine dosage was insufficient.

The Surveyor was informed of this analysis and the chlorine dosage was increased.

I take this opportunity of expressing my thanks to the Chairman and Members of the Health Committee and my colleagues for their support and assistance rendered to me in the execution of my duties.

I am, Mrs. Houfton and Gentlemon,

Your obedient servant,

G.H. CHAMPION,

Senior Sanitary Inspector.



